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The Spectator

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Publishing the Truth, From Good Motives and For Justifiable Ends

Utica journalists fight for local news and fair contract against corporate news giant Gannett

by Erin Delaney '26
NEWS EDITOR

Local journalists at the *Utica Observer-Dispatch* and *The Herkimer Times Telegram* are currently in a fight for the preservation of local news and the negotiation of a fair contract against Gannett, the nation's largest newspaper chain.

On Jan. 30, The Utica News Guild held a virtual town hall to inform the community about how Gannett has harmed local news coverage since its 2019 merger with GateHouse Media. During the one-hour meeting, local journalists represented by The News Guild of New York, a labor union representing nearly 6,000 media professionals at New York news organizations, spoke about their experiences and the challenges they face under Gannett's management.

In August 2019, the owner of the newspaper chain GateHouse Media announced their intention to merge with Gannett, the owner of *USA Today* and more than 100 other publications nationwide. In November 2019, the two merged in a $1.2 billion deal, creating the largest newspaper publisher in the U.S. Since the merger, the total headcount of the company has decreased by approximately 59%. Gannett has eliminated 117 locally focused websites and cut 127 of its weekly newspapers according to regulatory filings.

Amy Roth, Health & Education Reporter for the *Utica Observer-Dispatch*, described the newsroom's decline: "The vibrant newsroom I joined in 2005 is now covering a fragment of local news, running story after story from other non-local newspapers and failing to connect our readers to their community."

"Gannett prefers maximizing its profits and paying huge salaries and bonuses to corporate bigwigs over giving us the resources we need to cover [the] community," she continued.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NEWS GUILD OF NEW YORK

Newsroom staff represented by The News Guild of New York protest corporate newschain Gannett's layoffs, working conditions, and shrinking of local news coverage.

Since the merger, Gannett has slashed local paper staffs of all reporters. Casey Pritchard, public safety reporter for the *Utica Observer-Dispatch*, pointed out that papers such as the *Ohio Daily's*, the *Ashland Times Gazette*, *The Alliance Review* and the *Port Clinton News Herald* are all unstaffed.

The result has been an increase in so-called "ghost papers"—what *New York Times* reporter Marc Tracy defined as "thin versions of once robust publications put out by bare-bones staff" in a 2019 article about the merger.

"Gannett recycles homogenized news across the country, leaning into its *USA Today* content and giving readers the appearance of local news coverage, yet their communities are not covered at all," Pritchard said.

Pritchard pointed to the growing number of Gannett-owned ghost papers by examining their recent news coverage. When looking at the *Salinas Californian*, Pritchard found four stories—three of which were from *USA Today* and one from the *Associated Press*. There were zero bylines about Salinas or Monterey County. The *Port-Clinton News Herald* in Ohio had three stories from the Vermont News Messenger and one from *USA Today*'s staff. None of the news coverage was about Port Clinton, Ohio. *The Herkimer Times Telegram* no longer has any staff. Content comes from *USA Today* and copied-over stories from the *Observer-Dispatch*.

"This is what Gannett does," Pritchard said. "Smoke and mirrors designed to try to fool readers into thinking their communities are being covered."

Gannett has even used artificial intelligence to cover local news. In August 2023, the newspaper chain experimented with an artificial intelligence tool to write high school sports stories published by the *Columbus Dispatch*. The tool produced content that was widely ridiculed for its repetitive structure, lack of details and incorrect uses of sports terminology.

Gannett CEO Mike Reed was given a total compensation last year of $3.9 million, a 14% increase from the previous year, according to the company's annual proxy filing. Meanwhile, Gannett's median employee compensation was $50,856, which fell by $179 last year as inflation rose 3.4% over the same period.

"In contract negotiation, members of the guild highlighted Gannett's appallingly low, stagnant salaries for staff at the OD and how many on-staff can't af-

ford to live in the community they cover," Pritchard said.

A journalist at the *Observer-Dispatch* with three decades of experience is receiving a salary of $33,000 a year. Meanwhile, a living salary for a family of two working adults with two children in Utica-Rome, New York is around $53,000, according to MIT's Living Wage Calculator.

"We're having a terrible time recruiting new reporters," Roth said. "We're also having a terrible time keeping reporters. And then when reporters leave, because of the salary, it can sometimes take years to fill the positions, or they end up cancelling the position, and we never get it hired."

The *Utica Observer-Dispatch* has one education reporter covering 30 school districts, one sports reporter covering a two-county area, no business reporter, no staff producing content for opinion or editorial sections, and no coverage of restaurants or arts & entertainment.

"Executive salaries and bonuses certainly suggest that [Gannett] has chosen not to invest into the Utica newsroom," said John Pitaressi '70, who spent more than 43 years as a sports reporter and columnist for Utica newspapers. "This is an investment that would bring stability and experienced journalists, fill more positions and expand and improve coverage, which you would think would eventually lead to a product that is easier to sell," Pitaressi said.

New York elected officials have come out in public support of the Utica News Guild. The union received a letter on Jan. 22 signed by members of the New York State Assembly and another letter more recently from the New York State Senate. The News Guild has filed numerous unfair labor practice charges against Gannett, and the National Labor Relations Board has found merit in many of them. Several of the News Guild's charges are currently under investigation.

"At the beginning of the year, we took on this very same fight against the corporate media execs at Gannett in Rochester," said Susan DeCarava, President of The News Guild of New York. "It was a fight that we eventually won with a contract. And we want to do the same thing here in Utica."

"When you're dealing with a company run by venture capitalists, if you don't fight for proper journalism, no one else will," Roth said. "And we didn't get into this to do bad journalism or sloppy journalism or sponsored content. We got into this because we want to help our communities, and journalism, when done well, is an extraordinary way to do that."

"Journalism is the only profession that's mentioned in the Constitution as an integral part of our democracy," DeCarava said. "And so there is a sacred trust that any media company has, whether or not they acknowledge it, that they must fulfill."

The founding fathers, beauty standards and robot voices: AI in Hamilton's classrooms

by Erin Delaney '26
NEWS EDITOR

While the use of artificial intelligence in academic settings remains a topic of debate, two Hamilton professors are using AI technology in innovative ways to enhance their students' learning experience.

Ty Seidule, visiting professor of history and executive director of Common Ground, is teaching a class this semester called "Common Ground" where students can learn about the history of free speech in America through practicums. Seidule calls this course "a laboratory of civil discourse" in which students learn to disagree agreeably through exercises focused on the U.S. Constitution in role-playing games and an artificial intelligence large language model (AI LLM) for the founding fathers.

Partnering with Lisa McFall, director of digital initiatives, scholarship, and collaboration, and Douglas Higgins, digital scholarship technologist, Seidule is developing an AI LLM for his class so students can debate founding fathers.

Seidule first thought of this idea in a discussion with President Steven Tepper about the What If Initiative. When the question of "What if we could talk to Alexander Hamilton?" was brought up, Seidule reached out to McFall and Higgins in Library & IT Services (LITS) to bring the idea to life.

The first trial in this process involved building a persona within ChatGPT. The LITS team initially created personas for Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson. McFall says the team entered, "Pretend that you are Thomas Jefferson," into ChatGPT and worked to fine-tune the persona from there based on the knowledge the historical figure would have in that time period.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TY SEIDULE

Ty Seidule's Common Ground course gives students the opportunity to immerse themselves in revolutionary New York, as they give speeches, petition, and engage in civil discourse in the role of a Patriot or Loyalist—all while dressed in historical attire.

The team ran a workshop for Common Ground student ambassadors to test the prototype before introducing it to the class. McFall says they have been working with Seidule and his students to introduce additional founding fathers by training AI on writings done by these historical figures and knowledge of the Constitutional Convention of 1787.

One Common Ground senior fellow, Paige McKenzie '25, reflected on the benefits of this learning model. "Having students debate with the chatbot, ask questions, and even challenge their own perspectives based on how these figures might respond in today's world is an excellent way to encourage critical thinking and reflection. This process not only helps students understand history but also invites them to rethink how historical figures' beliefs and actions would play out in the modern context," she said. "This type of learning experience ties into Common

Ground's mission, where we emphasize the importance of engaging in productive dialogues and learning to disagree in healthy, constructive ways," McKenzie added.

Towards the end of the semester, McFall and Higgins will come to the class to teach students how to prompt answers from the AI tools. The technology will then be used by students to simulate discourse with the founding fathers. Students will be engaging with these AI-generated chatbots through questions such as, "What do you think a civil liberty is?"

Seidule says he is looking forward to having his students gain an understanding of how the founding fathers had differing opinions on many issues during that time, such as slavery and the Second Amendment right to bear arms. The last week of the semester will be dedicated to reflecting on the uses of the chatbots and capturing the lessons learned in that process.

"I had no expertise in [AI-generated chatbots] prior to this," says Seidule. "It's been great to have a long-term partnership with LITS throughout this process."

The development of the founding father AI chatbots has allowed for "a combination of history and cutting edge technology, which is very cool," says Seidule. "Students are excited about using AI in this way."

Meanwhile, Margaret Gentry, the Margaret Bundy Scott Professor of Women's and Gender Studies, is using AI tools in her Women's and Gender Studies class to look at and analyze how AI is visually portraying different social groups in response to prompts.

"I'm trying to get students to analyze what is going into the creation of material that AI—voices, images, written descriptions—and what it is producing back," she said.

She leads her class in an exercise where she uses ChatGPT or another AI image-generation tool to input a request, such as "Create images of beautiful women." When the images pop up, the class will analyze them in a discussion centered around societal beauty standards, gender roles and biases. Gentry noted that ChatGPT produces images of all young, thin, light-skinned women wearing V-necks that show cleavage when prompted to display "beautiful women." However, when AI is prompted with "Create images of handsome men," AI produces images of men in a wider age range and all are fully clothed.

"We talk about the fact that a higher percentage of the images that go into AI for women come from sexualized material, or pornography, than happens for men," she said.

She challenges the class to talk through questions such as, "What do these images tell us about how society views beauty?" and "What does that tell us about the images that AI is drawing from to create these images?" The class also discusses how those AI-generated images reinforce or create new images for people who are consuming what is coming out of AI.

Students have the option of writing a follow-up paper with several possible prompts, such as replicating what was done in class with a different social category, analyzing how AI-generated images affect women and people in marginalized communities or studying how AI perpetuates biases.

Gentry also examines AI in her seminar on aging, where the class looks at robots and care-giving AI voice assistants for the elderly. The class discusses why usually a female voice is being used by robotic or digital assistants for the elderly and how that is connected to the societal expectation that care is provided by females.

Gentry says these exercises have sparked insightful class discussions and have provided her and her students with a deeper understanding of the ethical issues surrounding the use of AI.

"When we use image creators or read an article that has used image creators, it gives a visual reality to it," she said. "I recognize the benefits of AI, but I'm also deeply concerned about how we are replicating certain kinds of stereotypes and how that limits us."

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHATGPT

Examples of ChatGPT-generated images of a "beautiful woman" and a "handsome man," an exercise practiced by students in Professor Gentry's Women's and Gender Studies class to study gender stereotypes and biases.

Dear Hamilton Community,

Happy February! It's the month of love, and fittingly, also the shortest month of the year. Although days around the Hill this season may be getting progressively shorter, darker and snowier, we hope your nights are getting warmer in time for Valentine's Day!

For all you hopeless romantics, a message: keep your heads up. Pry your gaze away from your feet as you brave the Martin's Way snow squall and meet life eye-to-eye. Look beyond the piercing hail rockets shooting at your head and at the piercing eyes walking right across from you. Love isn't dead.

As you continue your search for love, remember: There is no fashion Friday in frigid February. Wear layers! Bundle up! Wear the big coat even if you think it looks a little silly. Wear a fluffy hat even though it makes your hair look a little funny. Do it! Do it! Do it! Your campus unicorn will not think less of you, and in fact will probably find it endearing that you take care to avoid frostbite!

Lastly, *The Spectator* would also like to officially announce our support for the Philadelphia Eagles in this weekend's Super Bowl. Go Birds. If you would like to cheer on those Eagles, consider attending the Sadove watch party at 6 p.m. at the Little Pub.

Go Birds.

Sincerely,
The Spectator

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Celebrating 157 years,
we *were first published as* The Hamilton Campus *in 1866.*

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The Spectator's Letter to the Editor section is designed to be a forum for the entire Hamilton community to discuss and debate campus, local, national, and global issues. Pieces published in the section express the opinion of the individual writers and are not necessarily the opinions of *The Spectator*, its editors or the Media Board.

Letters to the Editor are welcome from all students, alumni/ae, faculty, friends of the college, and Hamilton community members.

The Spectator has the following policies for submission:

1. Submissions are due by 10:00 p.m. on the Monday before publication. The editors reserve the right to refuse any late submissions.
2. Letters should be no longer than 500 words. The editors reserve the right to cut off letters at 500 words.
3. Letters submitted anonymously will not be printed.
4. *The Spectator* reserves the right not to publish any letter it deems inappropriate for publication.
5. If a piece is determined to be libelous, an unwarranted invasion of privacy, or an unnecessary and/or unwarranted ad hominem or personal attack, it will not be published.

About Us

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SPEC SINGLES

KIRK PETRIE:

Hometown: Eastchester, NY.

Major: Psychology and Religious Studies.

Home on Campus: Milbank.

Turn on: GKR in the booth.

Turn off: A-Rod.

What TV character do you relate to most? Jake Peralta.

How do you rizz? Casual conversation.

What are three things you cannot live without? My humidifier, my guitar and the Mets.

If you could join one group on campus, what would it be? Ham iltones.

Which Hamilton rule would you break? Skipping choir.

Best hook-up spot on campus? List.

Thumbs up? Opening a can of tennis balls.

Thumbs down? Face-planting at the rock wall.

Campus crush? Edwin Mensah-Boateng ’25.

Perfect date? Dinner in Little Manila and a Mets game.

Weirdest thing currently in your room? Kim Jong-Un “Live Laugh Love” flag.

What food would you be and why? Milk—I just like milk.

Lights on or lights off? Lamp on, lights off.

Favorite campus study spot? Root 4th floor study rooms.

Light side or dark side? Light Side 100%.

What is the meaning of life? “The horses are prepared for battle, but victory comes from the Lord” - Jameis Winston.

Who is your celebrity crush? Jeff McArn.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years? Anywhere but Hamilton.

Describe yourself in 3 words: Soulful, hard-working, dedicated.

Soundtrack to your life: “My Life” by Billy Joel.

First thought this morning: Wow, it’s early.

What’s your type? Smarter than me.

Dealbreaker: Only listens to Taylor Swift.

CAROLINE CHAPMAN:

Hometown: Lexington, KY.

Major: Biochemistry and Studio Art.

Home on Campus: Milbank.

Turn on: Letting me use your Fubo subscription.

Turn off: Not letting me use your Fubo subscription.

What TV character do you relate to most? Dr. Gregory House.

How do you rizz? I skip diner line to get you a burger.

What are three things you cannot live without? Dr. Pepper, Vyvanse, KTSA color printers.

If you could join one group on campus, what would it be? Delta Kappa Epsilon.

If you could break one rule at Hamilton and get away with it, which would you choose? Having an unused green pepper glass bong in the Common Room.

Best hook-up spot on campus? Rugby Wall RIP.

Thumbs up? Daddy’s Little Meatball shirt.

Thumbs down? Mommy’s Little Meatball shirt..

Campus crush? Glenview bulldozer.

Perfect date? Nosferatu IMAX screening.

Weirdest thing currently in your room? Valterri Bottas nude calendar.

What food would you be and why? The bacon pizza I blended when my jaw was broken because the bacon bits are a choking hazard and so am I.

Lights on or lights off? On, but it has to be string lights wrapped around the fire sprinkler.

Favorite campus study spot? CJ basement.

Light side or dark side? Dark Side.

What’s the meaning of life? Getting a BIG BOOM from the Costco guys.

Who is your celebrity crush? Jennifer Coolidge.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years? At the Hamilton ten-year reunion.

First thought this morning: Where did my weighted dino plushie Carl go?

Describe yourself in 3 words: Female, two-eyed, Diner-tuscan-fanatic.

Companion (2025) lacks the gravity that it insists it has

by Sylvia Woodbury '27
STAFF WRITER

Girl meets boy. Boy is charming; girl falls head-over-heels. Boy invites girl to a remote house in the middle of the woods for a romantic get-away. Bad move, girl: anyone who's caught a few recent thrillers knows that this tried-and-true premise soon devolves into a bloodbath. How the female protagonist manages to get away from the get-away shapes the essential intrigue of flicks like *Ready or Not* (2019) or *Fresh* (2022). These biting thriller-comedies remix traditional love story tropes in order to capitalize on ready-made themes of exploitation, abuse and the hazards of modern-day dating. (The scene, apparently, is simply rife with nutcases and serial killers.) Drew Hancock's flimsy sci-fi thriller *Companion* is the newest addition to the pantheon, and that is probably the only superlative that could be deployed to describe this stale entry in the canon; the film's twists, tropes and themes come neatly pre-packaged and pre-digested. There is a tinge of *Bodies, Bodies, Bodies* (2022) here, and a whiff of *Promising Young Woman* (2020), but the film reenacts none of the incisive social satire or snappy humor of its predecessors, and its commitment to gore feels rote and emotionally vacant. It's not as if *Companion* crashes: that would imply that there's some heft, some gravity, to this weightless fiction.

If you've watched the incredibly revealing trailer for *Companion* (seriously, what's up with that?), you'll already be aware of the film's primary plot twist. Even going into the movie blind, the main curves of the tortuous plot are eminently guessable. When surprises do materialize—there are some clever scenes which shrewdly leverage previously-established exposition—they tend toward the inconsequential: we're already familiar with the broad strokes, and so the little splashes don't shock much. Take a look at the film poster, featuring protagonist Iris (Sophie Thatcher) wearing a pink ensemble and a perfectly-coiffed hairdo. She's smiling, but, eerily, her eyes are perfectly white. Perfection is a veneer—a symptom of restriction, or vice versa. There's trouble in paradise, we sense, and sure enough, Iris' boyfriend, Josh (Jack Quaid), is predictably jerkish from the get-go, dismissing Iris' anxieties about meetings his friends, bristly Kat (Megan Suri) and lovebirds Eli (Harvey Guillén) and Patrick (Lukas Gage) at a lakeside "cabin" (read: mansion) owned by the roguish, mustachioed Sergey (Rupert Friend). "Don't be all mopey and weird," Josh tells Iris. "Just remember to smile and act happy." But, as we suspect, there's much to worry about: Iris falls prey to Josh's ruthlessly mercenary schemes, and soon there's blood on everyone's hands, as well as on the floor.

Throughout the film, Iris arduously escapes from the chokehold of male fantasies and the power dynamics therein. But the film seems programmed to elide all thorny potentialities which might throw characters together in generative, rewarding ways. One of the other vacationers shares somewhat in Iris' predicament, but the two only trade a few lines of tepid dialogue. It's as if *Companion* is intimidated by its ensemble cast, swiftly dispatching each character as soon as his or her plot usefulness withers. Each actor adds only the barest, most tentative thematic or emotive ingredients to the communal pot. Thatcher and Quaid handle the material skillfully enough, but what material there is to work with is largely insubstantial and inert, a series of set pieces dragged from the dusty closet of time-worn sci-fi tropes. Josh's motivations aren't propulsive enough to compel his ludicrously poor decisions, and the film's premise allows it to circumvent its duty to flesh out its main character's personality, backstory and identity. Iris remains thinly-sketched throughout. There's not enough emotional rawness to the character for Thatcher to tap into her considerable talents. No scream queens here. Such an absence, an airy convenience of a character, underscores how oppressive gender norms and manipulative relationships rob victims of agency and self-determination. But this thematic throughline trips the film into a bit of a narrative catch-22: Iris' impassivity means there's not much to root, or feel, for.

Is director Drew Hancock acting the provocateur? The film's snappy, incongruous cuts, as well as its light polemicizing, seem to suggest so. But its meat-and-potatoes feminist satire doesn't actually provide much to chew on. Hancock only re-represents a power struggle that's been better interrogated in other films, works whose acid tartness feels critical and sincere rather than fabricated. At a brisk 97 minutes, it's not as if there's much fat to trim from this breezy production, and there's plenty of sinister details scattered throughout that might merit a rewatch. But *Companion* feels overly manicured instead of stylish—it's not twisted enough, not bizarre enough, not genuine enough, and certainly not fresh enough. Its intelligence is all too artificial.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW LINE CINEMA

***Companion* is part of a recent lineage of erotic-thriller efforts that have proliferated during the 2020s.**

Women's Hockey dominates against Williams at the Winter Classic, winning 4-1

by Alex Wagner '28
STAFF WRITER

On Friday night, Hamilton Women's Hockey defeated Williams 4-1 in front of a 400-person crowd at Russell Sage Rink, marking their fifth win in six games. Both teams came into the Winter Classic strong as Williams sought to utilize their momentum after sweeping Colby College the previous weekend and as Hamilton entered the game on a hot-streak.

The game started slow as both teams remained scoreless in the first period. However, Williams only managed five shots compared to Hamilton's ten. After a back-and-forth stalemate, the Continentals tallied their first goal with 7:58 left in the second period. Hamilton's Cuora Sullivan '26 capitalized on a loose puck in Williams' half of the rink, securing the puck around the back of the net where she continued to skate towards right below the left faceoff circle. She flicked a wrist shot that was then redirected in the air by Ava Romano '27 into the top-right corner past the goaltender's glove.

Late in the second period, Williams' Charlotte Fetherson '28 was penalized for hooking, which granted the Continentals a two-minute power play and a golden opportunity to extend their lead. Unfortunately, Hamilton was unable to find the net. Despite being outshot by several attempts, the Continentals took their single-goal lead into the third period, thanks in part to a strong preformance by goalie Teagan Brown '27.

Unlike the previous two periods, Hamilton started the final period aggressively, ripping several shots in the first few minutes. Finally, all of those chances paid off as just seven minutes into the third period, Lydia Bullock '26 gathered a rebound and shot from near the right post, which was deflected off the goalie. Lilly Truchon '26 poked the loose puck over the line to double the Continentals' lead, 2-0.

As time was running out, Williams pulled their goalie with five minutes left, hoping to generate an offensive attack to spark an end-of-game comeback. Nonetheless, this strategy was not as effective as Williams expected, allowing Lilly Truchon '26 to cash in an empty net goal, her second goal of the day. This was Truchon's first multi-goal game of the season and she now leads the team with five goals on the season.

Twenty seconds later, Williams emptied the net again immediately after the faceoff. This paved the way for Bri Rockwood '28 to net another empty-net goal, assisted by Grace Puskar '27, expanding the lead to four.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOSH MCKEE

Lilly Truchon '26 scores two goals in Hamilton's 4-1 victory over Williams.

The Ephs continued without a goalie and eventually denied the shutout, as Lucy Bond '26 scored with 2:25 to go. With the little remaining time left, Williams could not pose any other threat for the remainder of the game, and the Continentals were victorious, winning 4-1.

Brown had a stellar performance in net during the third period, saving 13 shots of her 27 total saves. Brown now has a .947 save percentage in 14 starts. This win marks the Continentals' fifth consecutive win against Williams.

However, this streak came to an end the following day. On Saturday, the teams faced off once again on Hamilton's senior night, where the Continentals fell just short of a three-goal comeback, losing 2-3. Nonetheless, after a slow start to the season, Hamilton looks to gain momentum at the end of the season after playing some of their best hockey.

The Continentals' final two weeks are crucial as they travel to a 14-3-0 Bowdoin—who are third in the NESCAC standings—this weekend for two games and go on the road the following weekend for a doubleheader against a 14-3-1 Amherst team, who sit atop the NESCAC standings. These games will be an excellent benchmark for the Continentals, who are looking to make a deep run in the NESCAC tournament in March.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOSH MCKEE

Abby Weiss '25 wearing the team's purple Alzheimer's Association awareness jersey.

Men's Hockey win nine straight games, ending the month of January undefeated

by Caroline Cornely '26
SPORTS EDITOR

Hamilton Men's Hockey extended their win streak to nine over the weekend following two away wins at Wesleyan (5-2) and 12th ranked Trinity (2-1). These wins have allowed Hamilton to finish January undefeated (8-0).

The weekend started off with excitement as the Continentals came back from a 2-0 deficit against Wesleyan with five unanswered goals. Wesleyan gained their early lead scoring two goals 62 seconds apart midway through the first period. This was goalie Charlie Archer's '25 first game back after he was out for two weeks due to injury and the goals were his only mistakes of the night. Hamilton started its comeback with 1:19 left in the first period when Nick Kent's '27 shot was blocked alongside the follow-up attempt by Max Bulawka '26 before Luke Tchor '27 finally finished it off after a sloppy deflection from Wesleyan's goalie.

The Continentals tied it with 5:50 remaining in the second period after Jackson Krock '26 won an offensive zone faceoff. He passed it to Kent who dished it to James Philpott '25 for the goal. Devon de Vries '27 put Hamilton in the lead 2:12 into the third period after Liam Varmecky '28 had his shot blocked and de Vries controlled the bouncing puck and scored. Krock made it a two-goal game at 4:51 of the third as Tchor and Kent picked up the helpers. Kent would finally get a goal of his own after his three assists to give himself a four point night on a power-play with 1:28 to go.

The Continentals swept the season series against the Wesleyan Cardinals. In the previous matchup, Hamilton recorded a 6-3 win at home on Nov. 23 and has now won five straight meetings with Wesleyan. The Continentals are 14-0 when scoring three or more goals this season. The four points by Kent is a personal season high, and he leads the team with 15 assists while Philpott scored his first goal since Dec. 1 and his third this season. The Continentals held a 34-19 shot advantage and won 36-of-58 faceoffs. Hamilton went 1-for-4 on the power play while Wesleyan was 1-for-3.

The next game was a true test for Hamilton as they matched up against a ranked opponent in Trinity. Both teams were held scoreless in the first period. Hamilton opened the scoring as Krock redirected the puck on a power play with 4:22 left in the second period. Trinity tied it up in the third on their own powerplay. De Vries got the game-winning goal with 5:11 left in the game off a one-timer thanks to a pass from Tchor off the faceoff dot. The Bantams pulled their goaltender with about 1:30 left but Archer was a brick wall and Trinity was unable to capitalize. Krock led the offense with a goal and an assist, and won 16 of 27 faceoffs. He has four multi-point games in the last five. Despite being a normally high scoring offense, Hamilton won for the first time this season scoring less than three goals in a game.

The pure domination the Continentals have had over the NESCAC at the moment can not be overstated. The team is now ranked sixth in the country, the highest the team has been ranked all season. They have an eight-point lead in the conference standings, with recently defeated Trinity being their only competition.

Archer leads goalies in the conference with a 1.24 goals against average and .945 save percentage. He is 3rd in all of Division III in goalie wins and goals against average and 4th in save percentage. Tchor leads the NESCAC with 25 points and 13 goals and is tied for 4th in assists with 12. He is 8th in Division III hockey in goals per game (.72) and is 13th in points. Kent is third in the NESCAC in assists (15).

The top four plus/minus spots in the NESCAC are all held by Hamilton skaters. In every meaningful category, a Continental is in the top five in the NESCAC. They are 1st or 2nd in every team based stat in the conference as well.

The team is the fourth best scoring defense in the country and also boasts the fourth best scoring margin thanks to their 11th best scoring offense in Division III. With six games left in the season, the team has already secured more wins than any of the past five seasons. These Continentals are good, at a level the Hill has not seen since the team's record-breaking season in 2016-17 when they made both the NESCAC finals and the NCAA quarterfinals.

The Continentals start a homestand this weekend as they face the Bowdoin College Polar Bears (7-9-2, 5-5-2) on Friday, Feb. 7 at 7 p.m and the Colby Mules (10-5-3, 5-5-2) on Saturday, Feb. 8 at 3pm. Both matches will be during Alumni Weekend.

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Nick Kent '27 leads to the team in assists and is third in the NESCAC with 15.